



State Scholarship Regulations Workshop

S.C. Commission on Higher Education
June 21, 2006



Agenda

- 10:30am Welcome**
- 10:35 am Review of Scholarship/Grant Regulations**
- 12:15pm Lunch**
- 1:45pm Issues of Concern**
- 4:00pm Adjourn**



Scholarship and Grant Programs

Palmetto Fellows Scholarship
LIFE Scholarship
SC HOPE Scholarship
Lottery Tuition Assistance
Need-based Grant



History

- **1995-** South Carolina had one financial aid program for students attending independent institutions and a merit based scholarship program for approximately 40 students per year (Palmetto Fellows).
- **1996 & 1998**– LIFE Scholarship Program and the SC Need-based Grant Program approved.
- **2001**– Lottery Tuition Assistance and SC HOPE Scholarship approved. Palmetto Fellows and LIFE are primarily funded through lottery revenue and State funds. LIFE Scholarship criteria is changed and award increases from \$3,000 to \$5,000. Palmetto Fellows award increases from \$5,000 to \$6,700.



Legislative Intent

- **Palmetto Fellows**- Recognize the most academically talented high school seniors in SC and encourage them to attend college in the State. Also, to encourage minorities to stay in the state.
- **LIFE**- Increase access to higher education, improve the employability of SC students, provide incentives for students to be better prepared for college and encourage students to graduate from college on time.
- **SC HOPE**- Provide funding to freshmen who have a 3.0 high school GPA who want to attend a four-year institution but do not meet the qualifications for the Palmetto Fellows or LIFE Scholarships.



General Eligibility Requirements

- Be a South Carolina resident;
- Be a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident (green card);
- Be enrolled as a degree-seeking student at an eligible South Carolina public or private institution;
- Certify that the he/she has never been convicted of any felonies and has not been convicted of any alcohol or other drug-related misdemeanor offenses within the past academic year (excluding Lottery Tuition Assistance Program (LTAP); and



General Eligibility Requirements (cont'd)

- Verify that he/she does not owe a refund or repayment on any federal or state financial aid and not be in default on any federal loans.
- Award Amounts:
 - Cannot exceed the cost of attendance (excluding LTAP, which can only be used toward the cost of tuition); and
 - Half awarded during the fall and half during the spring (LTAP may be awarded during the summer).



Palmetto Fellows Scholarship



Eligibility Criteria

General Eligibility Requirements:

- Score at least 1200 on the SAT (27 on the ACT) by the November national test administration of the senior year; earn a minimum 3.50 cumulative GPA on the SC Uniform Grading Scale, and rank in the top six percent of the class; or

Alternative Eligibility Requirements:

- Score at least 1400 on the SAT (32 on the ACT) by the June national test administration of the senior year and earn a minimum 4.00 cumulative GPA on the SC Uniform Grading Scale.



Awarding Process

- Students and guidance counselors apply online.
- Students can only apply for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship during their senior year of high school.

Early Awards:

- Must be completed by December 15 of the senior year— Class rank is determined by rank at the end of the sophomore or junior year of high school. GPA requirement must be met by the end of the junior year. SAT requirement must be met by the November test administration.

Final Awards:

- Must be completed by June 15 of the senior year— GPA and class rank requirements are based on the end of the senior year of high school. SAT requirement must be met by the June test administration.



Awarding Process (cont'd)

- Once awarded the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship, students receive \$6700 per year to go towards the cost-of-attendance, including tuition, room and board, books, etc.
- Students do not need to re-apply every year; if eligibility is met, the student will receive the Palmetto Fellows award the following academic year.



Terms of Eligibility

- The PFS can be awarded for up to eight continuous semesters at a four-year institution in South Carolina; students cannot take a semester off from school and receive the award again upon return. (Please refer to PFS Regulation Section 62-350, A-F pertaining to study abroad, co-ops, internships, etc.)
- Students must maintain a 3.0 GPA; classes taken at other institutions, while valid for credit, do not factor into a student's GPA for the PFS.



Terms of Eligibility (cont'd)

- Students must earn 30 credits hours per academic year.
- An “academic year” is defined as the fall semester, spring semester, and summer semester.
- Advanced Placement (AP) credit hours and credit hours from the previous semester are not valid.
- If a student fails to meet any of the continuing eligibility criteria and loses the scholarship, it cannot be regained. Loss of a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship is final.



SC HOPE Scholarship



Eligibility Criteria

- Earn at least a cumulative 3.0 GPA based on the Uniform Grading Scale (UGS) upon high school graduation;
- Be a South Carolina resident at the time of high school graduation and at the time of college enrollment; and
- Must not be a recipient of a LIFE Scholarship, Palmetto Fellows Scholarship or Lottery Tuition Assistance.



Awarding Process

- Full-time students attending an eligible four-year institution may receive up to \$2,650 (including a \$150 book allowance) toward the cost-of-attendance during the first year only. Half will be awarded in the fall semester and half in the spring semester.
- Students are eligible to receive the SC HOPE Scholarship for up to two terms based on initial college enrollment.
- Students who receive the SC HOPE Scholarship and earn a 3.0 LIFE GPA and 30 credit hours by the end of the first year may receive the LIFE Scholarship for the second year of college.



Lottery Tuition Assistance Program (LTAP)



Eligibility Criteria

- Must file the FAFSA or FASFA Waiver each academic year (check institutional deadlines);
- Enroll in a minimum of six (6) credit hours each term as a degree-seeking student in a certificate, diploma or associate's degree program;
- Students must not be a recipient of a LIFE, Palmetto Fellows or SC HOPE Scholarship during the academic year (fall, spring, and summer); and
- Students cannot receive LTAP for more than one certificate, diploma, or degree earned within any five-year period unless the additional certificate, diploma or degree constitutes progress in the same field of study.



Awarding Process

- Students must first apply federal grants and the SC Need-based Grant toward the cost-of-tuition.
- For the Summer 2006 term, students may receive up to \$78 per credit hour if enrolled part-time and up to \$936 if enrolled full-time toward the cost-of-tuition.
- The award amount is determined each term based on the number of eligible students and available funding.



Institutional Disbursement of Funds

62-900.185 (E)

At the end of each term, the institution will verify whether or not a student completed a certificate, diploma, or degree program during that term. Once a student completes a certificate, diploma, or degree program, they are not eligible to receive Lottery Tuition Assistance again within a five year period, unless the additional certificate, diploma, or degree constitutes progress in the same field of study.



Need-based Grant Program



Eligibility Criteria

- Be a "needy student" following the financial need analysis as established under Title IV Regulations for determining eligibility for Federal Student Aid. The student must file the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) Form;
- Be a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident that meets the definition of an eligible non-citizen under State Residency Statute;
- Be a resident of the state of South Carolina for twelve consecutive months as defined in Chapter 112 of Title 59 of the 1976 Code of Laws governing the determination of residency for tuition and fee purposes, unless the student qualifies for an exception as defined in the residency regulation promulgated by the Commission on Higher Education;



Eligibility Criteria (cont'd)

- Be enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a part-time or full-time degree-seeking student in an eligible program of study at an eligible public institution in South Carolina. A student enrolled in less than six credit hours during one semester may not receive a Need-based Grant for the semester in question but is eligible for reapplication for a grant upon return to part-time or full-time status;
- Be enrolled and attending or have completed at the time of the grant disbursement in a minimum of six credit hours if part-time for the semester or twelve credit hours if full-time for the semester;



Eligibility Criteria (cont'd)

- Certify that he/she has not been adjudicated delinquent, convicted, or pled guilty or nolo contendere to any felonies, alcohol, or drug related offenses under the laws of this or any other state or under the laws of the United States by submitting a signed affidavit each academic year to the institution testifying to the fact, except that a student who has been adjudicated delinquent, convicted, or pled guilty or nolo contendere of an alcohol or drug related misdemeanor offense is only ineligible for the next academic year of eligibility after the date of the adjudication, conviction or plea;
- Verify that he/she does not owe a refund or repayment on a State Grant, a Pell Grant, or a Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and is not in default on a loan under the Federal Perkins Loan or Federal Stafford Loan Programs; and
- Must reapply for the Need-based Grant each academic year and meet all eligibility requirements annually.



Awarding Process

- The Need-based Grant (NBG) is administered by the public colleges and universities in SC. The SC Tuition Grants Commission awards the NBG to private institutions as part of the Tuition Grant.
- The public institutions submit their NBG policies and procedures to CHE each academic year.



Continued Eligibility Criteria

- Complete a FAFSA each year;
- Be a “needy student” each year;
- Maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA; and
- Earn at least 24 credit hours if enrolled full-time or 12 credit hours if enrolled part-time each academic year for graduation purposes.
- A student may receive the Need-based Grant up to 8 full-time semesters or its equivalent.



Award Amount

- The institution will make awards in amounts to be defined in accordance with the Need-based Grants Program regulation and criteria, but not to exceed \$1,250 per eligible part-time student and \$2,500 per eligible full-time student per academic year, based on the institution's allocated funds for Need-based Grants and other financial aid awarded to individual applicants.
- Need-based Grants are to be used only towards payment for the cost-of-attendance as defined by Title IV Regulations.
- Institutions must give first priority and award the maximum allowable Need-based Grant (\$2,500 if full-time or \$1,250 if part-time) to students who are in the custody of the South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS). However, institutions should not award the maximum amount if, by doing so, this causes the student to exceed the unmet need according to Title IV Regulations.



Program Administration and Audits

62-500

- C. Where the initial allocation exceeds the need of students at an institution, the Commission shall have the authority to redistribute the excess funds to other institutions:
 - 1. All funds not awarded by the institution 45 days after the last day to register for the spring semester of the academic year shall be returned to the Commission for redistribution.
 - 2. Institutions in need of additional Need-based Grant funds for eligible students must provide documentation to this effect and must request additional funds from the Commission on Higher Education in writing by not later than 45 days after the last day to register for the spring semester of the academic year.



LIFE Scholarship



Eligibility Criteria

Initial Eligibility Requirements for Students Attending Four-year Institutions:

First-time full-time entering freshmen attending an eligible SC institution must meet two of the following three criteria to qualify for the LIFE Scholarship:

1. Minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA based on the SC Uniform Grading Scale;
2. Minimum 1100 SAT or 24 ACT; and
3. Rank in the top 30% of the graduating class (diploma eligible students only).

Initial Eligibility Requirements for Students Attending Two-year Institutions:

1. Minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA based on the SC Uniform Grading Scale (the standardized test score and class rank requirements are waived).



Awarding Process

1. Institutions are responsible for determining students' eligibility for the LIFE Scholarship.
2. Students may receive the following award amounts:
 - Four-year Public and Independent: Up to the cost-of-attendance, not to exceed \$5,000, including a \$300 book allowance;
 - USC Regional Campuses and Two-Year Independents: Up to the cost-of-tuition at including a \$300 book allowance; or
 - Technical Colleges: Up to the cost-of-tuition plus a \$300 book allowance.



Terms of Eligibility

The maximum number of terms of eligibility is based on the student's initial date of college enrollment:

- Two terms for a one-year educational program;
- Four terms for an associate's degree program or at least a two-year program that is acceptable for full credit towards a bachelor's degree;
- Eight terms (or its equivalent) towards the first bachelor's degree or program of study that is structured so as not to require a bachelor's degree for acceptance into the program and leads to a graduate degree program; or
- Ten consecutive terms towards an approved five-year bachelor's degree program.

* Any breaks in enrollment still count against a student's terms of eligibility. In addition, students who transfer from two-year institutions to four-year institutions can only be awarded up to eight consecutive terms of eligibility for the LIFE Scholarship based on students' initial date of enrollment at the two-year institution.



Continued Eligibility Requirements

For continued eligibility for the LIFE Scholarship at the end of each academic year, students must earn:

- A minimum 3.0 LIFE GPA based on all grades and credit hours earned at all eligible institutions (includes college grades and credit hours earned while in high school and grades and credit hours earned at out-of-state institutions); and
- A minimum average of thirty credit hours.

* “Academic year” is defined as the fall, spring, and summer sessions.



The LIFE GPA

- “LIFE GPA” is defined as the cumulative grade point average calculation that includes credit hours and grades earned at all eligible institutions (in-state and out-of-state) based on a 4.0 scale. Eligible credit hours and grades for courses that do not transfer based on an institution’s policy **must** also be included. Credit hours and grades earned through dual enrollment prior to high school graduation **must** also be included in the LIFE GPA.
- “Eligible institution” is defined as an accredited institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
- “Attempted credit hours” is defined as courses in which a student earns a grade and is included in the grade point calculation for that institution.



LIFE GPA Calculation

1. The calculation of the LIFE GPA must include:

- All credit hours and grades earned in high school while in a dual enrollment program at an eligible institution;
- All credit hours and grades earned at in-state eligible institutions;
- All credit hours and grades earned at out-of-state eligible institutions; and
- All credit hours and grades earned in study abroad programs that transfer back to any U.S. eligible institutions.



LIFE GPA Calculation (cont'd)

2. The calculation for the LIFE GPA must not include:

- Exempted credit hours;
- Advanced Placement (AP);
- College Level Examination Program (CLEP);
- Remedial/developmental courses;
- Non-degree credit courses for an associate's degree or higher;
- Pass/Fail; or
- Non-penalty withdrawal credit hours.

* Please refer to LIFE Scholarship Regulation Section 62-900.55.D labeled Institutional Policies and Procedures for Awarding for steps for calculating a LIFE GPA.



Annual Credit Hour Requirement

1. "Annual credit hour requirement" is defined as an average of thirty (30) credit hours earned at the end of the academic year based on initial college enrollment at all eligible institutions attended, excluding hours for remedial, continuing education, and non-degree coursework. Credit hours earned before high school graduation, Advanced Placement (AP) credit hours, exempted credit hours, and/or credit hours earned on active duty must count toward the annual credit hour requirement.
 - All credit hours that a student earns that are not remedial/developmental, continuing education, and non-degree coursework across all eligible institutions (in-state and out-of-state) must be included in the annual credit hour requirement for LIFE Scholarship eligibility. **Eligible credit hours for courses that do not transfer based on an institution's policy must also be included in the annual credit hour calculation.**




Annual Credit Hour Requirement (cont'd)

2. Students must meet the annual credit hour requirement (or its equivalent) by the end of the academic year based on initial college enrollment:
 - Earn a minimum of 30 (or the equivalent) credit hours if entering the second year; or
 - Earn a minimum of 60 (or the equivalent) credit hours if entering the third year; or
 - Earn a minimum of 90 (or the equivalent) credit hours if entering the fourth year; or
 - Earn a minimum of 120 (or its equivalent) credit hours if entering the fifth year of an approved five-year bachelor's degree program.




Transfer Students

1. Transfer students who receive the LIFE Scholarship and transfer mid-year to another institution may be eligible to receive the Scholarship for the spring term if they met the eligibility requirements at the end of the previous academic year:
 - Freshmen who transfer mid-year to the same type of institution (two-year to two-year or four-year to four-year) must have met the Scholarship requirements of the respective institution at the time of initial college enrollment; or
 - Freshmen who transfer mid-year from a two-year to a four-year institution must meet the eligibility requirements of a first-time entering freshmen enrolling at a four-year institution; or
 - Freshmen who transfer mid-year from a four-year to a two-year institution must meet the eligibility requirements of a first-time entering freshmen enrolling at a two-year institution.



Early Graduates and the LIFE Scholarship

- Students who complete their high school graduation requirements prior to the official graduation date reported on the final high school transcript may be eligible to receive the LIFE Scholarship dependent on the approval of the Commission on Higher Education (CHE).
- “Early graduate” is defined as a student who meets all of the requirements for graduation by the end of the fall term (December deadline) of the senior year of high school. A student who graduates a year early during the junior year of high school is not considered to be an early graduate for the purposes of LIFE Scholarship eligibility.



Early Graduates and the LIFE Scholarship (cont'd)

- The student must complete and submit an Early Graduation Application, an official high school transcript, an official letter from the high school principal verifying that he/she has met all graduation requirements, and SAT/ACT scores (if attending a four-year institution) by the established deadline of March 1st.
- Early graduates **cannot** use class rank in order to qualify for the LIFE Scholarship at four-year institutions for the spring semester, since the class has not officially graduated. A student may use class rank to receive the Scholarship after the class officially graduates, if enrolling during the fall term.
- A student who enrolls in an institution mid-year (spring term) as an early graduate **must** be enrolled as a full-time, degree-seeking student upon enrollment at the institution.
- The student **cannot** be awarded the LIFE Scholarship upon enrollment for the spring term. The student **must be reimbursed** pending Commission approval.



Early Graduates and the LIFE Scholarship (cont'd)

- In order to receive the LIFE Scholarship for the spring term **and** to be awarded the next academic year, a student who enrolls as an early graduate mid-year (spring term) must earn a minimum of fifteen credit hours and a 3.0 LIFE GPA at the end of the academic year.
- Early graduates who enroll mid-year (spring term) and are awarded the LIFE Scholarship through the Early Graduation process will officially begin their initial college enrollment and terms of eligibility for the LIFE Scholarship.
- The student will be eligible to receive the maximum number of terms of eligibility based on initial college enrollment.
- If a student does not submit an Early Graduation Application to CHE for the spring term and the student has not officially graduated, then the student **cannot** be awarded the LIFE Scholarship for the spring term **and** the spring term will not count against the student's terms of Scholarship eligibility.



Students' Responsibility

- Students are responsible for meeting all continued eligibility requirements for maintaining their LIFE Scholarship award; and
- Students are responsible for submitting official transcripts from all eligible institutions attended to calculate the new LIFE GPA and annual credit hour requirement.



Institutions' Responsibility

- Institutions are responsible for determining students' eligibility for the LIFE Scholarship;
- Institutions are responsible for ensuring that students are not awarded a LIFE Scholarship in error;
- Institutions are responsible for establishing a system to calculate the LIFE GPA; and
- Institutions are responsible for notifying all eligible students (i.e., Incoming Freshmen, Transfer Students, New Awardees and all Continuing LIFE Eligible Students-Sophomore, Juniors, Seniors) about the LIFE GPA and annual credit hour requirement.



Issues of Concern



SC Uniform Grading Policy

- In December 1999, the State Board of Education adopted the Uniform Grading Policy as prescribed by the General Assembly. The main purpose of the policy is to promote consistency among grading scales used by the State for scholarship eligibility.
- As of 2004, all high school grade point averages are required to be reported on the UGS to determine State scholarship eligibility.
- To view the SC Uniform Grading Scale Policy, please visit:
<http://www.myschools.com/offices/cso/ugp/>



South Carolina Residents Attending Out-of-State High Schools Eligibility & State Scholarships

- In March 2006, the General Assembly developed a Budget Proviso concerning South Carolina scholarship programs and out-of-state eligibility (see, 5A.29 of 2006-07 General Appropriations Budget).
- Beginning in Fiscal Year 2006-2007, students who are South Carolina residents and enrolled in out-of-state preparatory high schools shall be eligible to receive the Palmetto Fellows, LIFE and SC HOPE Scholarships.
- Eligibility shall be calculated utilizing criteria for in-state high school students.
- Any fees associated with the resulting conversion of grades or class rank to the SC Uniform Grading Scale (UGS) shall be the responsibility of the student.



South Carolina Residents Attending Out-of-State High Schools & the LIFE Scholarship

Past:

- Out-of-state students who are South Carolina residents were prohibited from using the class rank requirement to qualify for the LIFE Scholarship.
- Out-of-state students were only allowed to meet the GPA and SAT/ACT score requirements for LIFE Scholarship eligibility.

Budget Proviso:

- Under the Budget Proviso (5A.29), out-of-state students can meet the same requirements as in-state students.
- Students who graduate from preparatory high schools out of state are able to qualify for the LIFE Scholarship based upon the class rank requirement in addition to one of the other two initial eligibility requirements.




South Carolina Residents Attending Out-of-State High Schools & the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship

Past:

- Out-of-state students were not allowed to qualify for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship under the first set of eligibility criteria (i.e., minimum 1200 SAT/27 ACT, minimum 3.50 cumulative GPA on UGS, top six percent class rank), which includes a class rank requirement.
- Out-of-state students were only allowed to meet the alternative set of eligibility criteria (i.e., minimum 1400 SAT/32 ACT and a minimum 4.00 cumulative GPA on UGS) to qualify for the Scholarship.

Budget Proviso:

- Under the Budget Proviso (5A.29), out-of-state students can meet the same requirements as in-state students.
- Students who graduate from preparatory high schools out of state are able to qualify for the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship based upon both options.




South Carolina Residents Attending Out-of-State High Schools & the UGS Conversion Process

Student's Responsibility:

The student must contact the SC Commission on Higher Education for grades to be converted to the SC Uniform Grading Scale to receive the Palmetto Fellows, LIFE, and SC HOPE Scholarships.

Institution's Responsibility:


The institution is responsible for contacting the SC Commission on Higher Education about all out-of-state students who require Uniform Grading Scale conversions for scholarship eligibility.



South Carolina Residents Attending Out-of-State High Schools & the UGS Conversion Process (cont'd)

Out-of-State Preparatory High School Responsibility:

- Must agree to submit copies of official transcripts for all diploma eligible students in the relevant class to the Commission on Higher Education for conversions to the SC Uniform Grading Scale for a student to qualify based on the class rank requirement; or
- Must agree to convert the grades for all diploma eligible students in the relevant class to the SC Uniform Grading Scale for a student to qualify based on the class rank requirement. Institutions must use the final ranking as reported by the high school on the official transcript.
- In the event that the out-of-state preparatory high school does not agree to submit copies of official transcripts for all diploma eligible students in the relevant class to the Commission on Higher Education or the high school does not agree to convert the grades for all diploma eligible students in the relevant class to the SC Uniform Grading Scale, then the student must qualify by the GPA and SAT/ACT eligibility requirements.




South Carolina Residents Attending Out-of-State High Schools & the UGS Conversion Process (cont'd)

Students must submit the following documentation to the Commission on Higher Education:

- Completed Scholarship Grade Conversion Form;
- Official high school transcript(s) from current and all previous schools attended in a sealed envelope; and
- Payment and fees (Make checks and money orders payable to the SC Commission on Higher Education).

*All applications should be mailed to the SC Commission on Higher Education postmarked by the official deadline(s) to be considered.



South Carolina Residents Attending Out-of-State High Schools & the UGS Conversion Process (cont'd)

- The staff appointed by the Commission on Higher Education will convert grades to the SC Uniform Grading Scale (UGS) for GPA and class rank requirements for SC HOPE, LIFE, and Palmetto Fellows Scholarship eligibility, and will notify the student and institution of the results.
- Each institution will determine students' eligibility for the LIFE and SC HOPE Scholarships based on the Uniform Grading Scale conversions, and will notify the student and the Commission on Higher Education of the student's eligibility.
- The Commission on Higher Education will determine students' eligibility for all Palmetto Fellows Scholarship awards based on the Uniform Grading Scale conversions, and will notify the student and the institution of the student's eligibility.



Study Abroad Programs & the LIFE GPA

All credit hours and grades earned in study abroad programs that transfer back to any eligible institutions must be included in the calculation of the LIFE GPA:

1. **Eligible Institution:** The Commission on Higher Education defines an eligible institution as an accredited institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
 - Includes institutions both in-state and out-of-state.

Study Abroad Programs & the LIFE GPA (cont'd)

2. **Transferable Credit Hours:** Only the grades and credit hours that are transferred back to an accredited U.S. institution that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education should be included in the calculation of the LIFE GPA.
- If a student participated in a study abroad program, then all the grades and/or credit hours that are accepted and transferred back to an eligible U.S. institution must be included in the calculation of the LIFE GPA and annual credit hour requirement.
 - If a student participated in a study abroad program, then any grades and/or credit hours that are not accepted and do not transfer back to an eligible U.S. institution should not be included in the calculation of the LIFE GPA or annual credit hour requirement.

Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement (AP), Pass/Fail Courses & the LIFE GPA

Dual Enrollment:

- All grades and credit hours earned in high school while in a dual enrollment program at an eligible institution must be included in the calculation of the LIFE GPA and annual credit hour requirement.

Advanced Placement (AP) Courses:

- AP courses are **excluded** from the “attempted credit hours” used to calculate the LIFE GPA.
- AP courses **must count** toward the annual credit hour requirement for courses which a student received a score of three or higher on an AP exam for LIFE Scholarship eligibility.


Pass/Fail Courses:

- Pass/Fail courses are **excluded** from the “attempted credit hours” used to calculate the LIFE GPA.
- Pass/Fail courses **must count** toward the annual credit hour requirement for courses which a student received a grade of “Pass” for LIFE Scholarship eligibility.



Notification of the LIFE GPA to All Eligible Students

- All institutions are required to establish a system to inform students about their LIFE GPA for the purpose of awarding the LIFE Scholarship.
- All eligible students including incoming Freshmen, transfer students, new awardees and continuing eligible students (i.e., Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors) must be notified about the LIFE GPA.
- Students should be notified prior to summer sessions.
- LIFE GPA Notification should include the following information:
 1. LIFE GPA;
 2. Total number of credit hours earned;
 3. A definition of the LIFE GPA; and
 4. Explanation differentiating between the LIFE GPA and the cumulative grade point average listed on transcripts.



Transfer Students from Non-eligible Institutions & the LIFE Scholarship

- **Non-eligible Institutions:** If an institution is non-accredited or if an institution is accredited by an institutional accrediting agency that is not recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, then the institution is a “non-eligible institution” for the purposes of scholarship eligibility.
- For determining eligibility for a student transferring from a non-eligible public or independent institution (i.e., a school that is not an accredited institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education) for the LIFE Scholarship, institutions should consider the following requirements:
 1. Whether the student meets all eligibility requirements as established by law and regulation at the time of high school graduation and at the time of enrollment at the eligible institution;
 2. Whether the student was enrolled for more than two terms (or its equivalent) at a non-eligible institution; and
 3. Did an eligible institution (in-state or out-of-state) accept grades and/or credit hours as transfer credits from a non-eligible institution.

Transfer Students from Non-eligible Institutions & the LIFE Scholarship

The LIFE GPA and Annual Credit Hour Requirement

| IF: | THEN: |
|--|---|
| An eligible institution (in-state or out-of-state) transfers grades and credit hours from a non-eligible institution, | the grades and credit hours that transferred <u>must be included</u> in the calculation of the LIFE GPA and annual credit hour requirement. |
| An eligible institution (in-state or out-of-state) only accepts credit hours and does not accept any grades from a non-eligible institution, | the credit hours that transferred <u>must be included</u> in the annual credit hour requirement for LIFE Scholarship eligibility. However, the credit hours or the grades that did not transfer <u>cannot be included</u> in the calculation of the LIFE GPA. |

Transfer Students from Non-eligible Institutions & the LIFE Scholarship

Student Eligibility

| IF: | THEN: |
|--|---|
| The student has been enrolled for more than two terms in a non-eligible institution, | the student <u>must</u> earn a minimum 3.0 LIFE GPA and an average of 30 credit hours by the end of each academic year at an eligible institution to be awarded the LIFE Scholarship the next academic year. |
| The student has been enrolled in a non-eligible institution for no more than two terms (or its equivalent) and transfers mid-year, | the student <u>must</u> complete fifteen credit hours and earn a minimum 3.0 LIFE GPA by the end of the academic year at an eligible institution to be awarded the LIFE Scholarship the next academic year. |

Transfer Students from Non-eligible Institutions & the LIFE Scholarship


Terms of Eligibility

| IF: | THEN: |
|---|--|
| An eligible institution (in-state or out-of-state) <u>accepts</u> grades and/or credit hours from a non-eligible institution, | 1. the student's terms of eligibility for the LIFE Scholarship <u>must</u> begin with the date of initial enrollment at the non-eligible institution; <u>and</u> 2. the student <u>must</u> earn a minimum 3.0 LIFE GPA and 30 credit hours by the end of each academic year at an eligible institution to be awarded the LIFE Scholarship. |
| An eligible institution (in-state or out-of-state) <u>does not accept</u> grades and/or credit hours from a non-eligible institution, | the student's terms of eligibility for the LIFE Scholarship <u>must</u> begin with the date of enrollment at the first attended eligible institution (in-state or out-of-state). |

Transfer Students from Non-eligible Institutions & the LIFE Scholarship

Terms of Eligibility (cont'd)

| IF: | THEN: |
|--|--|
| 1. The eligible institution <u>does not accept</u> grades and/or credit hours from a non-eligible institution; 2. The student was enrolled in a non-eligible institution for no more than two terms; 3. The student has never enrolled in an eligible institution in-state or out-of-state during a fall or spring term (or its equivalent); <u>and</u> 4. The student meets the initial eligibility requirements as established by law and regulation at the time of high school graduation <u>and</u> enrollment in the eligible institution, | 1. the student <u>can</u> be awarded the LIFE Scholarship upon enrollment at an eligible SC institution; <u>and</u> 2. the terms of eligibility for the student must begin with the date of enrollment at the eligible institution. |
| The student enrolls in an eligible institution (in-state or out-of-state) at any point in time during a fall or spring term (or its equivalent), | the terms of eligibility for the student <u>must</u> begin with the date of enrollment at the first attended eligible institution. |



First-time Entering Freshmen Enrollment at Institutions Mid-year (Spring Term)

- A student who enrolls in an eligible institution mid-year (spring term) **must** be enrolled as a full-time, degree-seeking student upon enrollment at the institution.
- The student **may** be awarded the LIFE Scholarship upon enrollment for the spring term.
- In order to receive the LIFE Scholarship for the spring term and to be awarded the next academic year, a student who enrolls mid-year (spring term) must earn a minimum of fifteen credit hours and a 3.0 LIFE GPA at the end of the academic year.
- Students who enroll mid-year (spring term) and are awarded the LIFE Scholarship will officially begin their initial college enrollment and their terms of eligibility for the LIFE Scholarship.
- The student will be eligible to receive the maximum number of terms of eligibility based on initial college enrollment.



Home School Students & the LIFE Scholarship

- A home school student who has successfully completed a high school home school program in this State in the manner required by law may qualify for a LIFE Scholarship, if the student has met all eligibility criteria:

Initial Eligibility Criteria:

- Home school students must meet the following initial eligibility criteria for the LIFE Scholarship:
 1. Minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA based on the SC Uniform Grading Scale;
 2. Minimum 1100 SAT or 24 ACT; and
 3. Rank in the top 30% of the graduating class.


* Home school students **must** meet two of the three eligibility requirements to be awarded the LIFE Scholarship at a four-year institution, and meet the GPA requirement to be awarded the Scholarship at a two-year institution.



Home School Students & the SC Uniform Grading Scale

Minimum 3.0 Cumulative GPA Requirement:

- Students who are home schooled **must** have grades converted to the UGS by the approved home school association to which they are a member.
- If a student is not a member of an approved home school association, then the student may request that a South Carolina public high school in their district convert the student's grades to the UGS. (Note: High schools are not required to convert grades to the UGS for home school students.)
- If the home school student is unable to have their grades converted to the UGS by an approved home school association or by a high school in their district, then the student **must** earn eligibility for the LIFE Scholarship by maintaining a minimum 3.0 LIFE GPA and 30 credit hours by the end of each academic year at an eligible institution to be awarded the Scholarship. A cumulative GPA that has not been converted to the UGS cannot be used to qualify for the LIFE Scholarship.
- Grade conversions to the UGS that are hand-calculated or grade conversions conducted by parents **will not** be accepted for scholarship eligibility.



Home School Students & the SC Uniform Grading Scale (cont'd)

Top 30% Class Rank Requirement:

- If a student is a member of an approved home school association that ranks, a ranking report verifying class size and rank **must** be attached to the official transcript.
- If the approved home school association does not rank, then the student **must** qualify for the LIFE Scholarship based upon the GPA scaled on the UGS and SAT/ACT eligibility requirements (see, LIFE Scholarship Regulation Student Eligibility Section 62-900.10.4).
- A hypothetical class rank and a class rank that has been converted by an unapproved home school association **cannot** be used to qualify for the LIFE Scholarship.



South Carolina Senior Citizens and Tuition Benefits


- Under Section 59-111-320 of the South Carolina Code of Laws, Senior Citizens (age 60 and older) who are residents of South Carolina are entitled to enroll in courses at State supported colleges and universities and institutions under the jurisdiction of the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education on a space-available basis without the required payment of tuition. Senior citizens are required to pay all other applicable fees.
- Senior citizens must also meet admission and other standards deemed appropriate by the college, university, or institution, and cannot be receiving compensation as full-time employees.



Eligibility Criteria for South Carolina Senior Citizens & Tuition Benefits

To be eligible for tuition benefits in courses on a space-available basis, a person must:

- Be a U.S. citizen or a legal permanent resident that meets the definition of an eligible non-citizen under State Residency Statutes;
- Be a South Carolina resident at the time of enrollment at an eligible institution, as set forth by Section 59-112-10;
- Be a senior citizen defined as a person age sixty and over; and
- Must not be receiving compensation as a full-time employee.



Requirements for South Carolina Senior Citizens & Tuition Benefits

- Senior citizens may enroll in remedial/developmental courses to receive tuition benefit.
- Senior citizens cannot apply the tuition benefit to courses that are: continuing education, offered at other institutions out of state, study abroad, internships, practicums, exchange programs, or distance education courses offered out of state. These courses are excluded from the free tuition benefit. Senior citizen enrollment in graduate and professional level courses will be at the discretion of the eligible institution.
- Senior citizens attending classes on a space-available basis cannot be guaranteed enrollment in laboratory classes that are requirements for courses. Enrollment in laboratory classes must be granted on a space-available basis.



Requirements for South Carolina Senior Citizens & Tuition Benefits (cont'd)

- Enrollment in space-available courses without payment only covers tuition.
- Senior citizens attending classes on a space-available basis are responsible for paying all other applicable fees and for purchasing all required textbooks and materials for courses.
- Senior citizens attending classes on a space-available basis without payment of tuition can be admitted for enrollment into a course only after the course has met its minimum enrollment.
- In the event that a course has met the maximum enrollment allowed based on institutional policy, the senior citizen cannot be allowed to enroll in the course on a tuition-free basis.



Requirements for South Carolina Senior Citizens & Tuition Benefits (cont'd)

- Students enrolled full-time or part-time at the eligible institution must be given priority for available space(s) in courses.
- Senior citizens attending classes on a space-available basis can only be accepted for tuition-free enrollment in courses and given seats that cannot be filled by students enrolled full-time or part-time at the institution.




Need-based Grant Program and Foster Youth

- For the 2006-07 academic year, all institutions must award the maximum allowable Need-based Grant (\$2,500 if full-time or \$1,250 if part-time) plus up to an additional \$2,000 not to exceed the cost of attendance to students who are in the custody of the Department of Social Services.
- According to Budget Proviso 5A.26 of the 2005 Legislative Session, these students had to apply by May 1, 2006, for the 2006-07 academic year.



Academic Competitiveness Grant and SMART Grant


- General Eligibility Criteria includes:
 1. Be eligible for Pell Grant;
 2. Be a US Citizen; and
 3. Be a Full-time student
- The Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) is a \$750 grant for students in their first year or \$1,300 grant for students in their second year at a two- or four-year institution. In addition to the general eligibility criteria, a student must graduate from a rigorous high school program and maintain a 3.0 GPA to receive the ACG.
- The SMART Grant is a \$4,000 grant for students in their third and fourth years at a four-year institution. The student must have a cumulative 3.0 GPA and be majoring in mathematics, science, technology, engineering, or a critical foreign language.



Awarding Procedure for Federal Grants in relation to the SC Need-based Grant, Lottery Tuition Assistance Program and Palmetto Fellows Scholarship

Federal Grants

- Pell Grant
- Supplemental Educations Opportunity Grant
- Academic Competitiveness Grant
- SMART Grant (4-yr institutions only)



Calculating “Incompletes” in Regards to Continued Eligibility Palmetto Fellows Scholarship and LIFE Scholarship Lottery Tuition Assistance and Need-based Grant

- When determining continued eligibility for the next academic year, hours that appear on a student's transcript as “incomplete” are not included to determine whether the student met the credit hour requirement, nor should they be included in the calculation of Quality Points when determining the cumulative GPA.
- If the student is denied for the next academic year based on the cumulative GPA at that point, but becomes eligible when the grade for the “incomplete” is later reported, the student is eligible to receive the funding retroactively.
- If the student was awarded, but becomes ineligible when the grade for the “incomplete” is later reported, then the student must be notified by the institution that he/she owes a repayment for the funds he/she received. The student owes the repayment even if it was awarded in a previous award year.



Residency and People who Work Out-of-State

- The language below is being proposed for inclusion in Residency Regulation 62-609.
- “Residents who Work Out-of-State and their Dependents:” Persons who are SC residents for at least 12 months prior to beginning work out-of-state and maintain SC residency are eligible to pay in state tuition and fees, provided that they have taken steps to maintain a permanent residence in the State. Steps an independent person must take to maintain residency in South Carolina are listed in Section 62-606 entitled (“Maintaining Residence”). Documentation will be required in all cases to support this claim. South Carolina residents who change their state of legal residence while working out-of-state lose their South Carolina resident status for tuition and fee purposes.



Military Personnel and Residency

- **62-606**

B. Active duty members of the United States Armed Forces and their dependents are eligible to pay in state tuition and fees as long as they continuously claim South Carolina as their state of legal residence during their military service. Documentation will be required in all cases to support this claim. South Carolina residents who change their state of legal residence while in the military lose their South Carolina resident status for tuition and fee purposes.

- **62-609A**

1. "Military Personnel and their Dependents": Members of the United States Armed Forces who are permanently assigned in South Carolina on active duty and their dependents are eligible to pay in state tuition and fees. When such personnel are transferred from the State, their dependents may continue to pay in state tuition and fees for an additional twelve months. Such persons (and their dependents) may also be eligible to pay in state tuition and fees for a period of twelve months after their discharge from the military, provided they have demonstrated an intent to establish a permanent home in South Carolina and they have resided in South Carolina for a period of at least twelve months immediately preceding their discharge. Military personnel who are not stationed in South Carolina and/or former military personnel who intend to establish South Carolina residency must fulfill the twelve month "physical presence" requirement for them or their dependents to qualify to pay in state tuition and fees.



Scenario 1

A person is a member of the armed forces stationed in Kentucky. Prior to entering the military the person lived in Swansea, SC and had maintained Swansea as the place of legal residence on all military documents. In addition, the person has SC taxes taken out of the Leave and Earning Statement, has a SC driver's license, car is registered in SC and votes in SC. Is this individual a resident of SC? Can this individual's children be eligible for the State Scholarships if the academic criteria are met?

Answer:

- This person is a resident of SC according to regulation 62-606B. SC was listed as the legal residence on Military Form DD2058.
- The children will be eligible to receive State Scholarships if the academic criteria are met.



Scenario 2

A military family has recently been re-assigned to Fort Jackson, SC. The family has residency in California. There are two children in college and one is a senior in high school. Are the two children in college in SC eligible to receive in-state tuition and fees? Would the senior in high school be eligible for the State scholarships if the academic criteria were met?

Answer:

- The two children in college would be eligible for in-state tuition and fees based on regulation 62-609A. However, they would not be eligible for State scholarships because they were not dependents of a SC resident at the time of high school graduation.
- The senior in high school would be eligible to receive in-state tuition and fees but not State Scholarships. The family's residency is in California.



Scenario 3

A military family stationed in Sumter at the Air Force Base received orders to move to Fort Campbell Kentucky in March. They have a daughter who is a sophomore at Francis Marion University. The daughter has paid in-state tuition for her freshman and sophomore year. What would she pay for her junior year?

Answer:

- The student will be charged in-state tuition and fees for her junior year. According to 62-609A, a dependent of military personnel that is transferred from the State may continue to pay in-state tuition and fees for up to 12 months after the transfer.



Scenario 4

A person retired from the military on June 1, 2006 in Virginia Beach. The military person's Home of Record is SC. While serving in the military, the person continued to use his SC Driver's license and car registration. In addition he had SC taxes taken out of his paycheck. On November 15, 2005, he bought a vacation home overlooking the ocean. The military person's son graduated from high school in May 2006. Will the son be eligible for State scholarships? What documents need to be reviewed?

Answer:

The son would be eligible for State Scholarships if the academic criteria were met since his father maintained residency in SC while serving in the military. The documents that need to be reviewed include:

- SC Taxes
- Leave and Earning Statement
- Military Form DD 214
- SC Driver's License
- SC Car Registration



Scenario 5

A SC resident has served in the military for the last 32 years. From 1986 until 2003 he was stationed at the Air Force Base in Sumter, SC. In 2003 he was transferred to Hawaii but maintained his SC residency. His daughter graduated from Honolulu High School in May 2006. Is she eligible for State Scholarships?

Answer:

- According to LIFE Scholarship regulation 62-900.10A(2), A dependent of a member of the military is eligible if the parent or guardian has served in or has retired from one of the United States Armed Forces within the last four years, paid income taxes in this State for a majority of the years of service, and is a resident of this State to receive the LIFE Scholarship if the academic criteria are met.



Palmetto Fellows Scholarship & Distance Education as a Freshman

- Students must meet all requirements expected of a full-time, degree-seeking student;
- Students **cannot** be considered a transient student; and
- Students **must** take semester-bound courses.



Updates



Scholarship Regulations

- Regulations for the LIFE, Palmetto Fellows and SC HOPE Scholarships, Appeals and the Lottery Tuition Assistance Program were signed into law by the Governor March 24, 2006.



State Scholarships Appeals

Regulatory Authority:

- LIFE Scholarship – Section 62-900.50
- Palmetto Fellows Scholarship – Section 62-355
- SC HOPE Scholarship – Section 62-900.120



Save the Date!!!

- July 6th: Review of Scholarships and Grants Report
- September 5-8th: CACRAO 2006 Conference
- October 13th: Scholarship Appeals Deadline



Information

For more information concerning South Carolina Scholarships and Grants, please refer to the SC Commission on Higher Education's website at: www.che.sc.gov.

- **Scholarship & Grant Guidelines, Regulations, and Legislation:**
http://www.che.sc.gov/New_Web/ForInstitutions/Scholarship_Guidelns.htm
- **Scholarship Regulations Workshop Materials:**
http://www.che.sc.gov/New_Web/Workshops.htm
- **Scholarship Directives:**
<http://www.che.sc.gov/StudentServices/LIFE/Directives.htm>



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